

THE ARIKARA TRIBE. (Concluded.)

MATTHEWS and others mention the skill of the Arikara in melting glass and pouring it into molds to form ornaments; they disposed of the highly colored beads furnished by the traders in this manner. They have preserved in their basketry a weave that has been identified with one practised by former tribes in Louisiana—a probable survival of the method learned when with their kindred in the far S. W. The Arikara were equally tenacious of their language, although next-door neighbors of the Siouan tribes for more than a century, living on terms of intimacy and inter-marrying to a great extent. Matthews says that almost every member of each tribe understands the language of the other tribes, yet speaks his own most fluently, hence it is not uncommon to hear a dialogue carried on in two tongues. Until recently the Arikara adhered to their ancient form of dwellings, erecting, at the cost of great labor, earth lodges that were generally grouped about an open space in the center of the village, often quite close together, and usually occupied by 2 and 3 families. Each village generally contained a lodge of unusual size, in which ceremonies, dances, and other festivities took place. The religious ceremonies, in which each subtribe or village had its special part, bound the people together by common beliefs, traditions, teachings, and supplications that centered around the desire for long life, food, and safety. In 1835 Maximilian of Wied noticed that the hunters did not load on their horses the meat obtained by the chase, but carried it on their heads and backs, often so transporting it from a great distance. The man who could carry the heaviest burden sometimes gave his meat to the poor, in deference to their traditional teaching that "the Lord of life told the Arikara that if they gave to the poor in this manner, and laid burdens on themselves, they would be successful in all their undertakings." In the series of rites, which began in the early spring when the thunder first sounded, corn held a prominent place. The ear was used as an emblem and was addressed as "Mother." Some of these ceremonial ears of corn had been preserved for generations and were